

“Dashavatars of Vishnu” : Logical Analysis of the Characters

By VR Patil (email: vrpmet@yahoo.com)

Introduction: “**Dashavatar**” is one of the most popular stories of **Hindu Mythology**, and usually read by the persons of all ages. Basically, it talks about the **Ten Avatars /Incarnations** of God **Vishnu/Visnu** who arrives in the world in the ten different physical forms as per the demand of the situations, just to set the law and order or **Dharma** in place. Since **Vishnu** is defined as the **Sustainer** or **Preserver** in the legends, the **Dashavatar** story tells the same, but in a typical mythological style. The story depicts, whenever necessary, **Visnu** incarnates in a suitable form, and saves the Earth and living beings from the clutches of the evil forces who create trouble for others. It can be termed as the Need Based Descend of **Vishnu**. Puranas inform us that till date, **Visnu** has taken Nine Avatars, and tenth would descend on Earth at the end of Kaliyuga. The story appears in many Puranas/Legends and has some variations in content as well.

In mid nineteenth century, when **Charles Darwin**, based on his observations, and findings on Nature, proposed a new theory of evolution through his book titled as, “**On The Origin of Species**” (first published in the year 1859), after reading his book, then the some free-thinkers and the philosophers of that time started seeing a reflection of the process of evolution of Man in the legendary **Dashavatar** story. Even today, the **Dashavatar** story attracts widespread interest from the philosophers and the enthusiasts from all over the world, as in someway it supports the views expressed by **Darwin** who stated that the “**Animals and Man share common ancestry**”.

In the present article, an attempt has been made to unfold some typical features of the **Avatars/ Characters** mentioned in the story using an **Investigation Approach**. For this purpose, **Scientific Information** available in the public domain on the various topics such as origin of first vertebrate animal in water, to transfer and progress of life on land, to the importance of the development of Physical, Behavioural and Weaponry Aspects in human life have been considered for explanation.

At the same time, it is humbly submitted that there is no intention to challenge anyone's beliefs or hurt anybody's feelings or propagating myths.

Brief Background of the “Dashavatar” Story : As mentioned earlier, the **Dashavatar** story exhibits some variations from text to text, but in the present article, the following order of **Dashavataras** or **Ten Incarnations** of **Vishnu** has been considered.



Figure-1 , Pictorial presentation of Vishnu's Ten Avatars/Incarnations

1. **Matsya** (Fish) – **Vishnu** takes the shape of a fish to save **Manu**.
2. **Kurma** (Turtle) – **Vishnu** takes the form of a turtle to bear the load of **Mandara mountain** the when it starts sinking in the ocean of milk.
3. **Varaha** (Wild Boar) - **Vishnu** becomes **Boar**, hold Earth between his tusks and restores it to its place in the universe.

4. **Narasimha** (Half Man-Half Lion) - **Vishnu** appears as **Narasimha**, thus destroys a demon to end the suffering of his devotee.
5. **Vamana** (Dwarf Person) – **Vishnu** takes birth as a human of short stature to win back the kingdom for **Indra** from the Asura's King **Bali**.
6. **Parashurama** (Priestly Warrior) – **Vishnu** is born in Priestly family, and destroys the Warrior community 21 times using an **Axe**.
7. **Rama** (Prince) – **Vishnu** takes birth in Kshatriya family to get rid of **Ravana** the Devil.
8. **Krishna** (Commoner) – **Vishnu** is born in a royal family but brought up as a cow-herder or ordinary person by the foster parents, kills his maternal Uncle **Kansa**.
9. **Buddha** (Sage) – **Vishnu** takes birth in a Royal/Kshatriya family, but gets disturbed due to sufferings of human beings, hence leaves the Palace, and Family, becomes Sanyasi, and the Preacher to overcome the problem.
10. **Kalki** (horseman) - who is yet to appear.

Out of the **Ten Avatars**, first four belong to **Satya Yuga**, 5 to 7 - **Treta Yuga**, 8- **Dwapara Yuga**, and 9-10 (last two) are the part of **Kali Yuga**.

It is evident from the presence of the names of the Characters like **Rama** and **Krishna**, that the story would have been composed sometime between 200 to 400 AD, but after the composition of the Epics **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata**. In Legends, **Vishnu** is described as the **Savior**, the **Preserver**, and the **Protector** of the world created by **Brahma**. Therefore, to fulfill his primary duty as a **Protector** or **Guardian** of life on Earth, he comes to the Planet Earth in difficult times and restores the **Dharma**/law and order by defeating the various evil characters.

Some persons believe that the story indicates beginning of vertebrate animal life in water (Fish), then its diversification to reptile (Turtle), then transformation into a land-based omnivorous mammal (Wild Boar), subsequent upgradation to Carnivorous animal (Lion), and, its ultimate evolution to Advanced Man (Vamana to Kalaki).

Categorization of the Characters:

As it is seen from the list of Avatars/Incarnations, the first four Avatars (**Matsya**, **Kurma**, **Varaha**, and **Narasimha**) are illustrated in the forms of four different Animals (all belong to **Satya Yuga**), and also have distinct characteristics, but there is no reference about their **Parents** found in the Legends. In means, each one is projected as the **Direct Entry** in the troubled mythical plot/scenario in the respective Avatar. Therefore, they are placed in a separate **Category-I (Animal forms)**. In other words, to suit the occasion, the composer of the story has presented **Vishnu** in a specific form to perform a specific role at a specific location (**on the Spot Appearance**).

Whereas, **Vamanavatar** onwards, we find names of both parents in Puranas / history (see Table-1), that also exhibits each character takes birth as a child, grows in a family with other members, live a normal life, and hence in true sense, these next five characters/ incarnations represent the actual **Human beings**, and hence placed in **Category-II**. As **Kalaki Avatar** is yet to appear, and therefore, has not been discussed.

Table-1, Parentage Details from Vamana to Kalaki

Avatar number	Name of Vishnu	Father's Name	Mother's Name	Character Type	Yuga's Name
5	Vamana	Kashyapa	Aditi	Legendary	Treta
6	Parashurama	Jamadagni	Renuka	Legendary	Treta
7	Rama	Dasharatha	Kausalya	Legendary	Treta
8	Krishna	Vasudeva	Devaki	Legendary	Dwapara
9	Buddha	Shuddhodhana	Mayadevi	Historical	Kali
10	Kalaki	-	-	Not yet born	Kali

A. Logical Analysis of Category-I Characters:

It is well accepted that, as an invertebrate, Animal life first began in water, then through the process of evolution got upgraded to vertebrate there itself, got transferred to land first in the form some early invertebrates, then in water itself early vertebrates

diversified into animals like amphibians, reptiles, that subsequently led to evolution of the Mammals including Human. The following paragraphs give a brief idea about the evolution of these four animals mentioned in the story i. e., first four **Avatars** of **Vishnu**.

1. Matsavatar/ Fish:

Story tells us that **Vishnu** takes the form of **Fish** to save **Manu** and others from Pralaya/deluge.

Fish is the vertebrate animal believed to have evolved in ocean from the earlier Jaw-less Animals (Jaw-less fishes?) about 500 to 450 million years ago (mya) either during the Geological Period, Ordovician (485 to 444 mya) or **Silurian** (444 to 420 mya), flourished further during the **Devonian Period** (420 to 360 mya). Some researchers specially term the **Devonian Period** as the “**Age of Fishes**”. As we know, fishes can not live without water, and also lay a large number of eggs in water.

2. Kurmavatar/ Turtle:

As per legend, during **Samudra Manthan Process**, when **Mandara Mountain** is being lowered in an ocean of milk, it starts sinking. Then **Vishnu** becomes **Kurma/ Turtle** to support it from bottom.

Turtle actually represents a **Reptile** class animals, but would have been evolved from the earlier Amphibians. It is believed the **Tetrapods** or four legs animals would have evolved from lobe-finned fish of the clade **Sarcopterygii** appearing in coastal water in the middle **Devonian period**, giving rise to the first **Amphibians** in a short timespan 385–360 mya. Transformation from **aquatic** to **terrestrial** life would have occurred in the members of amphibian groups during the later ages. Today, there are many variants of Amphibians. Researchers say that the **Pedripes** were the earliest known fully terrestrial tetrapod.

A reptile like **Turtle** can live in water and land. The earliest species of **Turtle** are believed to have lived around 200 million years ago during the late **Triassic** period (250 to 201 mya). This four leg reptile animal evolved well before early mammals, birds,

reptiles like snakes, crocodiles etc. In fact, **Turtles** outlived many species of their age of evolution, and some believe that their unique shell structure (natural protective Armour or Kavacha Kundala?) would have been the real cause for their longterm survival in the competitive world. Similar to **Fishes**, all **Turtle** lay eggs but in sand/seashore or on land.

3. Varahavtar/Wild Boar:

Vishnu appears as **Varaha** to defeat demon **Hiranyaksha** to rescue **Earth** from the custody of the demon. Story tells that **Varaha** carries the Earth out of the ocean between his tusks and restores it to its place in the universe.

A **Wild Boar/Pig** is basically a terrestrial four leg mammal/ animal who can walk faster than Turtle, and hence moves very easily from place to place. It is believed the that the **Ancestors** of this animal would have got separated from the earlier mammals way back about 40 million years ago. But the **Modern Pig** would have been evolved around 10 mya. The most wonderful thing about **Pig** is, its **Adaptation** to different food and climatic conditions. It can tolerate temperature conditions ranging from -50 to +50 degree Celsius. Some Pigs are omnivorous, can eat many things available in surroundings. They have a few sweat glands, and hence need to maintain body temperature through what is called as behavioral **thermo regulation** or **coating the body with mud (willowing)**. Animals evolved **earlier** to **Pig** like **Fishes**, **Reptiles**, and **Amphibians** lack sweat glands.

Surprising, **Pigs** share a number of comparable traits with humans. They are social animals, look after their babies very well, have some similar anatomical features including frontal face and skull, skin, flesh like human. They can swim and run as well. They are clever animals and stand fourth among the animals, behind Chimpanzees, Dolphins, and Elephants. They have excellent sense of smell. A new genetic study suggests that **Primates** and **Pigs** share a hidden evolutionary relationship. A few years back, there was news in Media that an experiment has been conducted to transplant Pig's heart to Human. Medical researchers predict that in future, some human organs like lungs can be grown in Pig's body through genetic modifications. As **Wild**

Boars regularly destroy the standing crops, in India they are treated as the enemies of the Farmers. But in many western countries, Pigs are farmed just for the consumption of flesh known as **Pork**.

4. Narsimha Avatar/Half Man and Half Lion:

As per the story, due to boon of **Bramha**, a demon called **Hiranyakashyapu** acquires special powers, as it makes others to defeat or kill him impossible. Therefore, **Hiranyakashyapu** starts persecuting everyone including his son **Pralhada** who is a devotee of **Vishnu**. Finally, **Vishnu** appears as **Narasimha** an anthropic-pomorphic incarnation meeting all necessary conditions that are required to teach a permanent lesson to demon, with the body of a man and head and claws of a lion, kills **Hiranyakashyapu** at the courtyard threshold of his house, at dusk, with his claws.

In true sense, it denotes a transition from a wild Carnivorous four legs Animal like Lion to two legs early Human species or **Homo Erectus**. Evolution of Lion is not yet clear, and many evolutionists speculate that **Lion** would have evolved 1 million to 8,00,000 years ago in Africa. The scientists have found fossils of lions in Eastern Africa trace to the Late Pliocene period and in Eastern and Southern Africa of the Early Pleistocene era. About 40 million years ago, due to favorable conditions, in East and Southern Africa many grassland areas would have developed, that provided the permanent food, and hence became home to several new species of the grazing animals through diversification. Therefore, it is quite possible that many carnivorous animals belonging to **Felidae (Cat)** and **Canidae (Dog) Families** would have also evolved in Africa. Incidentally, it is also believed that **Homo Erectus (upright man)** or a species of archaic Man is evolved in East Africa.

In short, the first four Avatars of **Vishnu** intimate us that **Animal Life** originated first in water that evolved to vertebrate like **Fish**. Then came an animal who can survive in water and on land as well i.e. **Turtle**. Terrestrial four leg mammal/ animal **Wild Boar/Pig** appeared next in order. Pure carnivorous animal **Lion** to **Upright Man** evolved subsequently through the natural cycle of evolution and upgradation. It means, **Struggle**

for existence, natural selection, and divergence are the real factors that played the key roles in the process of transformation of **Animal to Human Life on Earth**.

Observations based on the number of Offspring of the Four Animals:

Out of names of four different animals mentioned in first four **Avatars** of **Vishnu**, **Fish** and **Turtle** lay eggs that give rise to offspring or creation of next generations (Oviparous animals). Other two animals, i.e., **Wild Boar/Wild Pig** and **Lion** are the mammals who directly give birth to their babies or young ones (Viviparous animals).

Fishes: There are variety of Fishes found in the marine world who lay eggs, but number of eggs laid is different for different species. Some species lay eggs in a single digit, some in a few hundred, and some lay eggs more than 10,000. This may be partly due to high rate of death, and partly due to attack of predators in water. On an average, number of eggs laid by the Fishes can be taken as a few hundred to thousand.

Turtles: Turtles lay eggs in a nest dug into sand or soft land surface. Number of eggs laid at a time ranges from 70 to 130. Hence, on an average we can take a figure of 100 number eggs for a Turtle.

Wild Boar/Pigs : Being a mammal, a mature Female Pig can give birth to the babies in 6 to 12 numbers. Hence, **9** is taken an average figure for one time litter. Pig's baby is called as Piglet or Shout.

Lions : Among the **Cat** family members, **Lion** is an unique animal who lives in a group or **Pride**. In a Pride, there could be two to several lionesses, their babies and dominating males. After gestation period of around 110 days, a mature female lion gives birth to one to six cubs, but two to four being common.

Humans: As we know, man is a social animal, and a mature woman generally gives birth to one child at a time.

The general trend is that, there is decrease in number of offspring from Fish to man.

The speciality of Offspring

When we take a close look at the available information on the number of offspring of the five aforementioned animals, Fish (who lays eggs in water) to Turtle (who lays eggs on Land), we find decrease in number of **eggs** laid at a time. Similar trend is also seen in the mammals as well, i.e., reduction in number of babies delivered or littered by the land based mammals, from **Wild Boar** to **Man**.

In the kingdom of fishes, it is well known that a big fish swallows small fishes mostly for survival.

As far as the first two egg laying animals are concerned, a fish lays its eggs in water which are jelly like. Water provides desired wetness and cushioning to the laid eggs. If a fish egg is kept in an open atmosphere, it may get dried out immediately.



Figure-2a, Eggs of a Fish



Figure-2b, Jelly like fish eggs

Similarly, all turtles lay eggs but in the nests dug into the sand. Unlike fishes, Turtle's egg has hard outer cover or shell made up of Calcium Carbonate that provides necessary protection from the harsh surroundings it encounter during the process of laying till hatching. As a Turtle does not hatch its eggs, therefore, its eggs may not survive if they are continuously covered with water. No species of turtle nurtures their young. After hatching, a newborn turtle uncurls its body and shell.



Figure-3a, a Turtle Laying Eggs



Figure-3b, baby turtle comes out of egg

Females of **Wild Boar** and other **Pigs** as well build the nests by creating depressions or pits on the land, then cover them with grasses, leaves and branches of plants in which they give birth to the piglets. New-born Piglets start suckling the milk from their mother within minutes after birth.

Now, when the fourth Avatar of **Vishnu** is taken for discussion, a fresh question comes up, that is, the composer of the story has specifically used wild animal **Lion** in conjunction with Human (half Man and Half Lion / **Narasimha**) to identify the joint character/venture and not **Tiger**, Why?

The possible answers to above question is as follow,

1. **Lion** is a **social animal**, lives in a group with other males, females and their cubs, but a **Tiger** prefers to live alone.
2. Male lion has, a thick layer of hair around its neck called as **mane**, hence it becomes easy to distinguish between male and female lions (See Figure 4a and 4b). The **Mane** is the most recognizable feature of male lion. But there are some male lions too who do not have **mane** around their neck region.



Figure 4a, Male lion having **Mane**



Figure 4b, Female lion without **Mane**

In case of human beings, males generally have hair on their face, as we see in the form of grown and trimmed **Beard**, and **Mustache** a sign of manliness, mostly in Indian males and some western modern men. But the females do not show the same feature on their faces. Therefore, similar to lions, in humans as well, we can easily identify male and female from a relatively longer distance.

Both **Tiger** and **Tigress** lack the presence of any special facial feature similar to lion and man for ease of their distinct identification from a distance.

Above points make it clear that the **Lion** is best suited character for “half man-half animal” incarnation/ **Narasimha** and not the **Tiger**.

Now coming to the comparison of behavioral aspects Lion and Man, in case of Lions, a newly declared undisputed king of the **Pride**, kills the cubs of Lionesses originated from the earlier Leader of the group, just to prove his dominance, and wants to see the further continuation of **Its** lineage only.

Same thing holds true for the human beings also. Since ancient times, **The War of Succession** was a common thing in the many Royal Families who ruled different parts of the world, and similar events have also been reported in some of the present-day Royal Families. Some examples of the war of succession that occurred in India are given below.

Aurangzeb, sixth Mughal Emperor, kept his father **Shaha Jahan** in confinement till his death, and also killed his elder brother, **Dara Shukoh** to acquire the throne of **Agra**.

In **Maratha kingdom** also, after the death of **Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**, we find beginning of the **War of Succession**. **Soyarabai**, one of the wives of **Shivaji Maharaj** with the help of some of the courtiers, wanted to see her 10 years old son **Rajaram** as the king of Maratha kingdom instead of **Sambhaji** the eldest son of **Shivaji**. But her plan was thwarted by her own brother, **Hambirrao Mohite** the first Chief of Maratha Army, who supported **Sambhaji**. Finally, **Sambhaji** became the king.

During the regime of **Peshavas** in **Pune**, **Raghunathrao Peshava** killed his own nephew **Narayanarao** who was **Pehava/Prime Minister of Maratha Empire** of that time, and had acquired the post after the death of his elder brother **Madavarao**.

The **Struggle for Power** has also been reflected in Hindu Puranas/Epics. In **Ramayana**, **Kaikeyi**, third wife of King **Dasharatha** wants to see her son **Bharata** despite being younger to **Rama** and **Lakshmana**, becoming king of **Ayodhya**. In the Epic **Mahabharata**, King **Dritarashtra** wishes his eldest son **Duryodhana** to occupy the royal seat of **Hastinapur** though he is younger to **Yudhistira**, the eldest son of **Pandu**.

In other words, an urge to rule or to exhibit supremacy over others is a very common thing among the some members of the families of the Lions and the Human beings. It is nothing but a natural tendency to show **Might is Right** or to prove **the Survival of the Fittest** or can be simply defined as the reflection of **Animal Instinct**.

B. Logical Analysis of Category-II Characters:

This category includes next five avatars of **Vishnu** beginning with **Vamanavatar**. As mentioned earlier, based on available information about the parents of **Vamana** to **Buddha** incarnations, these five characters are treated as the human beings. In the following paragraphs, the characteristic features of the five Avatars have been explained under two different heads,

- a. Understanding the development of different facets of human nature, and**
- b. Knowing Progress made in Weaponry field from Vamana to Buddha.**

a. Vamana to Buddha : Progress in Behavioural Aspects

A close examination of the **Dashavatar** story reveals the various shades of human behavior, and that has been explained in the following paragraphs.

5. Vamana:

As per the story, **Bali**, the great grandson of demon **Haranyakashyapu** and the grandson of **Pralhada** a devotee of **Vishnu** (both figure in **Narsimhavatar**) defeats **Indra** the king of Devas/God and captures his throne, and also extends his authority over the three worlds. Then **Kashyap** and **Aditi**, the parents of Gods request **Vishnu** to win back the throne of **Indra** from king **Bali**. Accordingly, **Vishnu** takes birth as **Vamana**, a dwarf person, goes to **Bali** when he is performing Yajna, asks him to provide place to keep three strides first, then changes his size to a Giant **Trivikrama** form, and subsequently sends **Bali** to **Patala Loka**.

When the fourth avatar of **Vishnu** is compared with his fifth avatar, then the act of **Vamana** clearly indicates the development of **Thinking Man** (Homo Sapien) from the

earlier **Wild** or **Archaic Man** (**Narasimha/ Homo Erectus**). This is because, like **Narasimhavatar**, here **Vishnu** does not use physical force to subdue king **Bali**, but uses his **brain** to dethrone the **latter** from the seat of Heaven, and also tactfully sends him in Patala-loka, so that **Bali** would not interfere in the matter of Heaven on a regular basis. The change of form of **Vishnu** from a **dwarf** to **Giant** size can be interpreted as the **growing expectations** or soaring aspirations of **Wise Man**, as the history tells us that among the several important animals, though small in size but only man has attained the success in many unknown and impossible fields including taming the giant animal like Elephant, to capturing aggressive wild animals Lions/Tigers, to landing on Moon. Today, man has made a colony on Antarctica Continent, the coldest place on Earth. These things clearly highlight the fact that man has brought whole world to his **Feet** using **Brain**. Though Man has planted his **feet** firmly on ground, but his **ability to think and act (thoughtful actions)** keeps him to fly high to explore new areas in Space, makes him to reach the base of oceans or to probe the core of Earth.

Logically speaking, **Vamanavatar** actually manifests the transformation of early **Wild Man** to **Wise Man**.

6. Parashurama :

Legends intimate us that **Parashurama** is the son of Sage **Jamadagni** of Bhrugu clan (Brahmin) and **Renuka** (originally from Kshatriya/warrior family) and receives an Axe after penance to Lord **Shiva**. Once, upon receiving order from his father, **Parashurama** beheads his mother **Renuka** for alleged infidelity. But when his father offers him boon, he promptly asks his father to restore his mother to life. When in his absence, kshatriya king **Kartavirya** (also known as **Sahatrabahu Arjuna** in Legends) abducts **Kamadhenu** cow from Ashrama/hut of his father, after learning from his parents about the incidence, he goes to capital **Mahishmati** and slays the king in his palace. When **Prashurama** and his brothers are away from **Jamadagni's** Ashrama, then Sons of **Kartavirya** come to Ashrama, kills his father. **Parashurama** takes a vow to finish every kshatriyas from the land, picks up his Axe and kills all sons of **Kartavirya** and destroys

their **army**. **Parashurama** continues his act for ridding the world of kshatriyas twenty-one times till his grandfather makes him to stop.

Parashurama is seen as the character having **Brahmin-Kshatriya** combination, and hence also called as warrior-saint by many. His father, **Jamadgni** is a self-made Warrior-Sage. In legends, **Jamadgni** is also known as a short tempered person. Additionally, his mother originally belongs to Kshatriya family. Therefore, it can be safely assumed that **Parashurama** genetically receives the attributes like anger and fighting spirit of Kshatriya class mainly from his parents. But he has very special qualities as well, such as **Obedience** -as he complies his father's order to behead his mother; **Revenge**- he retaliates with full force when Kshatriya king **Kartavirya Arjuna** abducts **Kamadhenu** cow first, and when sons of **Kartavirya** kills his father subsequently. He goes on rampage and keeps killing Kshatriya class people for 21 times, till his grandfather halts him. Many identify Parashurama as the righteousness person.

In short, **Parashurama** represents **Angry Man**, does not spare whosoever troubles his parents, especially his Father (can be termed as **Pitrubhakta**). When acts in **Revenge Mode**, with the **killing instinct**, he goes after the **Kshatriya class** people and destroys them 21 times. From this point of view, in the present context, **Parashurama** can be called as **Immortal Terminator** of the Hindu Legends.

7. Rama:

Also known as **Ramachandra**, is one of the most widely worshiped Hindu Deity, the principle figures of the **Ramayana** epic, and seventh Avatar of **Vishnu**. It is believed that **Rama** is born in the lineage of great Kings like **Ikshvaku** and **Raghu** of Solar dynasty (Suryavanshi). Kosala king **Dasharatha** is his father and **Kausalya** is the name of his mother. Though the eldest son of king **Dasharatha**, but on his father's instructions **Rama** leaves his palace just before his coronation as the future king of **Ayodhya**, to spend 14 years in exile in the forests as per the terms and conditions laid down by his step-mother **Kaikeyi**. His wife **Sita** and his half-brother **Lakshmana** accompany him to spend 14 years in exile.

Situation takes dramatic turn, when **Ravana** king of **Lanka** kidnaps **Sita**, with the help of a decoy, takes her to his kingdom and expresses his desire to marry her. When **Sita** refuses to oblige him, then **Ravana** starts harassing her.

While wandering in search of **Sita**, **Rama** comes across **Sugriva** the leader of Monkeys' army. **Rama** helps **Sugriva** in getting back his wife and kingdom from his elder brother, **Vali**. As per the understanding, then with the help of **Hanumana**, he locates **Sita** in **Ashok Van** of **Lanka**, crosses the sea, ultimately reaches **Lanka**, fights a war with **Ravana**. Finally, **Rama** kills **Ravana**, and makes **Vibhishana** (younger brother of **Ravana**) king of **Lanka** and comes back to Ayodhya with **Sita**. Within a few days after returning to Ayodhya, **Rama** learns that some people of his kingdom regularly raise doubt about **Sita's** purity, as she has spent sometime in **Ravana's** custody. Therefore, he orders **Lakshmana**, to leave her in the forest.

When we examine **Ramayana** closely, we find that Sage **Valmiki** has portrayed the character **Rama** as the most accomplished **Human being/Person** and not **God**. Though it is believed that **Rama** is the seventh incarnation of **Vishnu**, but he does not use his **Divine Power** to subdue his enemies in the various battles he fights during his lifetime. **Ramayana** also informs us that even though **Rama** is born in **Kshatriya** family, but exhibits no aggression like **Parashurama**, and also does not believe in the **Instant Justice**. The best part of the story is that **Rama**, as a human, regularly shows compassion, a sense of justice, courage and patience in the difficult situations as well. He knows where to draw the lines, or up-to what extent stretch the limit, actually means **Maryada Purushottama**. Though he is favourite son of **Dasharatha**, but does not question his father for asking him to spend next 14 years in exile, but honours his words. It means, he is duty-bound to complete the task given by his father. At the time of difficulty also he remains calm and composed. He takes the life the way it comes to him. Probably, he believes that his **Destiny** would decide what would happen in future and also act as the real shaper or maker of his life. Hence, **Maturity in Thinking** and **Emotional Stability** are the two important attributes of **Rama** that makes him **Adarsha Purush** or an **Ideal Man** or a **Model Person** of Hindu Puranas.

Now we shall see How **Rama** reacts in two different situations pertaining to **Sita**, his beloved wife. **First occasion:** while living in exile, as per the desire of his wife **Sita**, **Rama** goes out of his hut to hunt Golden Deer/ **Maricha**, but after coming back to his place of living, when he notices that his wife is missing from the hut, then he receives shock of his life, sinks in grief. While searching for **Sita**, when **Rama** and **Lakshmana** meet injured **Jatayu**, a bird who tells them that **Ravana**, a **king of Lanka** has kidnapped **Sita**, then he decides to find out kingdom of **Ravana** first, and try to locate **Sita** there. To do so, he does not mind taking the help of **Monkeys**. Although he is projected as the avatar of **Vishnu**, but here **Rama** can be seen as a common man in a desperate situation who is compelled to use the expertise of the animals for locating his wife. Through this episode, he forms a permanent bond with the Monkeys and with **Hanumana** specifically. But before getting his wife back from **Ravana**, **Rama** has to spend many years in wilderness separated from his only wife **Sita**.

Second occasion: after killing **Ravana**, making **Vibhishana** a new king of **Lanka**, he returns to **Ayodhya** with **Sita** and **Lakshmana**. Upon reaching his native place in **Pushpaka Vimana**, the people of **Ayodhya** welcome him with great love, and then he is finally sworn in as the King of **Kosala** kingdom. For some years, with the king like **Rama**, and **Sita** as the Queen of the empire, the people of **Ayodhya** live in harmony, and spend many days happily.

Situation changes dramatically, when **Rama** hears from his spies that first it is a washer-man, then one by one other people of his kingdom start posing a question “why did our King accept **Sita**, when she has spent many years in **Rakshasa's (Ravana)** house?” The doubt raised by the subject about his wife's purity leaves **Rama** completely devastated. After spending several sleepless nights, he decides to abandon **Sita** in Forests.

When we bring two aforementioned but different events on a common platform and then take a causal look at them, we may come to the conclusion that **Rama** has made a crude mistake in sending **Sita** in exile. But when we try to analyze these events in the right perspective, then we learn that he is right in his own way. This is because, in the first case, as a husband or Head of the Family, it is his primary duty to look after or protect his wife which he fails to do so. Therefore, he has no option but deal with the

situation as it comes to him. In the second case, he is the king of **Kosala** means Head of the Nation. Now, his reputation as the righteous king is at stake. As a perfect king, he does not want see a blot on his tenure. Hence **Rama** is in Moral Dilemma. Ultimately, he weighs his role as **Head of the State** more important than the **Head of the Family**, and decides to leave **Sita** in forest, but does not marry at all (**Ek Patnivrata**).

In sum, the character **Rama** of **Ramayana** portrays him as the most Perfect Man who has **balanced head**, keeps his words, strictly follows **Dharma**, and hence is respected by many. He is also projected as an **Ideal King** who is duty-bound, and willing to sacrifice anything for his subject when the situation demands.

In comparison to **Vamana** and **Parashurama**, through the personality of **Rama**, Maharshi **Valmiki** has tried to propagate the importance of **High Moral Values** in the life of human beings, that also led to introduction of the concept of **Rama Rajya** (Ideal State) which became a benchmark or standard for the future kings/rulers.

8. Krishna:

Although in **Dashavatar** story, **Krishna** is regarded as the eighth incarnation of **Vishnu**, but the character **Krishna** is also found in the different Hindu Puranas/Legends such as **Vishnu Purana**, **Bhagavat Purana**, **Harivansha**, **Mahabharata** epic etc. As per the Puranic story, his father is **Vasudeva** and mother's name is **Devaki** who is the sister of **Kansa**, the king of Mathura. When **Kansa** comes to know through a **prophecy** that he would die at the hands of **Devaki's** son, then he puts both **Devaki** and **Vasudeva** in the prison so that he can kill their children immediately after birth itself. But when Devaki gives birth to her eighth child in a prison, somehow, **Vasudeva** manages to take him to his friend's place i.e. **Gokula**. Thus, **Krishna** grows in the house of his foster parents; **Nanda** and **Yashoda**.

As per the legends, **Krishna** spends his childhood in the company of many **Friends** and **Gopikas** of **Vrindavana**, and receives love from all womenfolk of the region. This part of his life is generally described as **Krishna-Leela** or **Raas-Leela**. As a youth, **Krishna** starts herding cows in **Vrindavana** means does an ordinary work.

Subsequent to killing of his maternal uncle **Kansa**, **Krishna** moves to **Mathura** and lives there with his grandfather **Ugrasena**. After the death of his grandfather, he becomes king of **Mathura**, lives there for sometime till he finds unsafe to live there due to **Jarasandha**, and finally shifts to **Dwaraka**, west coast of present day Gujarat state.

Legends inform us that **Krishna** has eight principal wives (Ashta-bharya) namely, Rukmini, Satyabhama, Jambavati, Nagnajiti, Kalindi, Mitravinda, Bhadra, Lakshmana. Additionally, he gives status as his wives to **16100 women**, those are rescued from the captivity of **Narakasura**, but are not accepted by their earlier husbands.

The special qualities of **Krishna** are explained in the following paragraphs.

Krishna, a strong supporter of “Everything is fair in Love and War”:

Krishna, not only kidnaps **Rukmini** and marries her, but also encourages **Arjuna** to do similar thing. **Arjuna**, on his advice abducts **Krishna's** sister **Subhadra** and marries her. It means, when you are in love with someone, go for it openly.

In the beginning of **Mahabharata** war, **Krishna** makes it very clear to **Arjuna**, that not to look at the members of **Kauravas'** Army as the relatives or the nearer and dearer or close-ones, but the real opponents who are present here to fight a war. Even though **Krishna** declares that he would not participate in the war actively, but makes his presence felt in the every move of **Pandavas**. He tells his beloved **Pandavas** not to go by the rules and regulations of **Dharma-Yuddha**, but act as per the prevailing situation. That is why, he uses **Shikhandi** as a shield to protect **Arjuna** from the arrows of **Bhishma**; instructs **Yudhisthira** to kill an elephant named, **Ashvathwama**, then also tells the eldest Pandava to say in such a way that **Dronacharya** would get confused (**Naro wa Kunjaro** incidence), so that **Dhrushtadhumnya** would do his task easily. Additionally, he advises **Arjuna**, not go by **Karna's** version of **Dharma-yuddha**, but actually reads out a list of the sins intentionally committed by **Karna** in the past in association with **Kauravas**, and hence mentally prepares **Arjuna** to kill **Karna**. In this way, by providing “**practical solutions**” to the factual problems, **Krishna** plays a very crucial role in eliminating the first Three Important Commanders of **Kauravas'** Army.

At the end of war, when **Bhima** takes on **Duryodhana** in **Gada-yuddha**(mace war), he gives a hint to **Bhima** to hit **Duryodhana's** thigh with his mace (below waist attack is not permitted in Dharma-Yuddha), and a blow of **Bhima's** mace finishes the latter. When **Balarama**, the elder brother of **Krishna** gets angry with **Bhima**, then **Krishna** tells his brother that, a long ago **Bhima** has taken a vow to break a thigh of **Duryodhana**, and he has fulfilled his vow now. Somehow, **Krishna** manages to bring down the anger of **Balarama**, and saves **Bhima** from problematic situation.

Logically speaking, the critical events of Mahabharata war can be termed as “the tacts of Krishna, behind the acts of Pandavas”.

A close scrutiny of the various events mentioned in the different Legends about the life of **Krishna** brings out the fact that he firmly believes in the “ **Tit for Tat**” principle. He is very specific about the events of the pasts, and hence frequently reminds **Pandavas**, especially **Arjuna**, not to forget the past. Therefore, he regularly professes that “treat the people, the way they have treated you earlier time”.

But the fundamental question is, why does **Krishna** follow “**blow for a blow.**” tactic?

A Psychological Study of this legendary character would provide proper answer to the aforesaid question. Since **Krishna's** birth, we find that his life is always in danger. As a child, he faces several threats to his life from his close relatives. **Kansa**, his maternal uncle, wants to kill him as soon as he is born. As a child, his maternal aunt (**Putana** Mausi) feeds him poisons milk. As a boy, he is invited by **Kansa** to participate in wrestling in his capital **Mathura**, so that as per the plan can be killed there. But, **Krishna** miraculously survives several attempts on his early life. Therefore, he is very watchful about the behavior of the other people, and follows the principle of “ **look before sip**” . Based on his life experiences, he has created his own method of judging the people.

One more typical feature of the character **Krishna** is, he is not worried about “what would people say”, and hence free from that dogma. For example, when he decides to kidnap **Rukmini** and marry her, he shows willingness to face the consequences of it,

and deals the situation in his own way, cares no one. Similarly, when he decides to relocate his kingdom from **Mathura** to **Dwaraka** due to regular disturbances from the supporters of **Kansa**, and **Jarasandha**, father-in law of **Kansa**, he is just not bothered about the views of the people. From this particular incidence, **Krishna** is called as “**Ranchod**” means a person who has fled the battlefield due to fear of life, but his followers take this identification sportingly. It shows firmness of daredevil **Krishna** while deciding.

In this way, a legendary character **Krishna** presents us many shades of human nature. **Krishna** can be described as a multi-dimensional personality who plays different roles including an innocent child (Krishna-Leela), a cowherd, an entertainer (a flute player), a disciple (Sandipani Rishi), a friend (children of Gokula, Sudama, Arjuna), a lover (Radha and other Gopikas), a charioteer (Parth Sarathi), a brother (Subhadra, Dropadi), a guide (Pandavas), and a real messenger (in the form of Bhagavat-Geeta).

9. Buddha :

Buddha is also known as Gautama **Buddha**, a historical figure, was born into the royal family of a small kingdom about 2600 years ago in a place called **Lumbini**, near **Kapilavastu** in present-day **Nepal**. The original meaning of Sanskrit word **Buddha** is ‘one who is awake’; in the sense of having ‘woken up from the sleep of ignorance to reality’. His mother’s name was Queen Mayadevi and his father was King Shuddhodana. It is said that the believers of **God Vishnu (the Vaishnavites)** inducted **Buddha** in **Dashavatar** story in the recent past, probably anytime between 3th to 6th century AD, when **Buddhism** had just begun to decline from its peak in Indian subcontinent.

At the age of sixteen, **Siddhartha Gautama** marries **Yashodhara**, daughter of a local king called **Suprabuddha**. He gets a son known **Rahula** from this marriage. As king **Shuddhodhana** is only interested in seeing **Siddhartha** as a king of his kingdom, hence tries to shield his son from ground realities of day-to-day life, provides all luxuries to his beloved son, prince **Siddhartha**.

Once, **Siddhartha** while taking round in a town sees an old age person begging in the street, he gets totally upset. After sometime, when he comes across a sick person laying on a ground, that disturbs his mind. Finally, when **Siddhartha** notices a dead body of a person and many crying people sitting next to it in a town, he gets shock of his life. Since then, he starts asking questions to the seasoned people of his kingdom about 'Old Age', 'Illness', and 'Death' but nobody could satisfy his curiosity. Ultimately, he decides to move away from the kingdom to understand the real cause behind the **Sufferings** or **Dukkha** a man has to undergo at the time of old age, sickness and death.

As per the texts, when he is around 28 years old, once in a night when his wife and son are in deep sleep, **Siddhartha** leaves his palace in pursuit of truth but without informing any family member about his future plan. It should be noted here that he abandons his family just to find out a permanent solution to the problem of **Dukkha** that every living person has to experience. Over the next six years, he meets several persons and the influential thinkers who are the experts in the fields of philosophy and meditation. Despite interacting with these great scholars of his time on several occasion does not provide satisfactory answers to his queries, then he decides to go alone, starts living ascetic life, and experiences hardship. Still he does not find proper answers to his questions, finally, decides to sit under a Bodhi tree at a place called **Bodh Gaya** for deep meditation. On a full moon day, he understands the real nature of life and death cycle applicable to all living beings. Through this spiritual journey, he attains the Enlightenment, a real moment of becoming “Buddha”. After spending some-more time in **Bodh Gaya**, he decides to dedicate the rest of his life to teach others what he has discovered. Thus, he spends remaining 45 years of life in educating the people.

Information about Buddha's life is available in many texts, but what surprises the most is his path of achieving the goal, his subsequent understanding of the facts about life and death, and his innovative methodology to reduce the intensity of sufferings.

The best part of **Buddha's** life, he uses the “**Search Mode**” to find out answer to his query. In modern days, “**Search Mode**” represents scientific approach to solve any problem faced by the human beings. Actually, **Siddhartha Gautama** goes on “the **facts finding mission**”. There are several researchers and scientists in the world who have

dedicated their lives in the past and many are doing the same thing in the present time as well for getting answers to the real problems faced by the people and striving hard to improve life of every living being.

Siddhartha Gautama starves himself, follows strict austerity measures, tries to experiment on himself so that he would get first hand experience of the sufferings like any ordinary person. It means, like present-day science, he uses **Experimental** and **Observation techniques** to discover the real causes of **Dukkha** and their effects on the human beings.

What is meant by an Enlightenment?

“An Enlightenment means transformation of Questionable mind to Answerable thoughts”.

Questionable mind: Mind of **Siddhartha Gautama** which used to pose him a series of questions, about the regular sufferings of the people.

Answerable thoughts : Thoughts evolved through the deep meditation process that provide satisfactory answers to the queries of **Siddhartha Gautama**.

Awakening practically means the victory of **Knowledge** over the **ignorance**. It has brought complete change in the attitude of an ordinary person called, **Siddhartha Gautama** towards life, and successfully turned him into **Gautama Buddha**.

Awakening can also be defined as the self-realization.

From his personal experiences, **Buddha** tells us that life is full of **Dukkha**, and it is the **First Truth** one has to accept. He emphasizes application of critical thinking in understanding the problems. On ethical part, **Buddha** proposes a threefold monitoring of our actions: mental, verbal, and bodily. From the self-study point of view, **Buddha** has presented his findings in the form of **Four Noble Truths** are as follow.

1. Suffering is common to all.
2. We are the cause of our suffering.
3. Stop activities that cause suffering.
4. Enlightenment is the Path to end Suffering. Everyone can achieve it.

Buddha has suggested the **Eightfold Path** consists of eight basic practices to overcome the problem of **Dukkha** by way of changing behavior in a systematic manner:

Right View-Vision of the nature of reality and the path of transformation,

Right Resolve- Liberating emotional intelligence in life for pure love and compassion,

Right Speech- Clear, truthful, uplifting and non-harmful communication,

Right Conduct- Basic principle of non-hurting of oneself and others,

Right Livelihood-Correct action, follow ethical principal of non-exploitation,

Right Effort- Path of creative and healing action that fosters wholeness.

Right Mindfulness-Complete or Thorough Awareness.

Right Samadhi-Concentration, meditation, absorption or one-pointedness of mind.

Having realized that the sufferings are the part and parcel of the human life, and the traditional rituals are ineffective in providing permanent relief to the people, but just divert attention for sometime, **Buddha** develops a new technique to reduce the severity of **Dukkha**. As degree, and the reasons for Grief/Pain vary from person to person, he introduces a **Cause and Effect Analysis** (a scientific approach in present context), a self-diagnosis or self-assessment tool to determine the real causes of sufferings. **Buddha** desires that every individual needs to participate actively in this self-evaluation process to know the facts about **Dukkha**. To provide relief from the growing pressure of Sufferings, he professes use of **Deep Meditation** technique to achieve the concentration of mind as it has potential to act as a self-healing mechanism. **Meditation** has two fold benefits. Firstly, it acts as a damage control exercise to the existing problems, and secondly it mentally prepares a person to face the future challenges in a better way.

In this way, **Buddha** succeeds in establishing himself as the **True Teacher** and the **Spiritual Leader** for the mankind.

b. Knowing Progress made in Weaponry field from Vamana to Buddha

Though the list of Category-II characters begins with **Vamanavatar**, but as **Narasimha** (Half man and half animal) exhibits some features of early man, this part of analysis would begin with the **Narasimhavatar**.

4. **Narasimha's Physical Power through his Arms:** As explained earlier, **Vishnu** takes this incarnation specifically to get rid of a demon, **Hiranyakashyapu**.



Figure-2. Narasimha killing Hiranyakashyapu using his forearms

In **Narasimhavatar**, **Vishnu** is depicted to possess head and arms of a Lion and a torso (trunk/lower part of shoulder) of a Man. As we see in many wild life documentaries, that a wild animal like a tiger or a lion uses its two forelimbs to get hold on its prey. In the same way, here also, **Narasimha** makes use of his hands and nails to kill the demon. It practically means, **Narasimha** actually uses both brain and the arms of lion (animistic trait) to execute **Hiranyakashyapu**. Lower part of his body (human) is used just to stand upright and then to hold demon's body in a proper position.

In other words, **Narasimha/Vishnu** exercises his **Physical Power** through his **Hands** to murder **Hiranyakashyapu**.

5. **Vamana's Brain Power:** Unlike **Narasimhavatar**, here **Vishnu** is shown as a dwarf person, but tactfully uses his feet (three strides) to push king **Bali** to hell.



Figure-3, Vamana uses his feet to dethrone **Bali** from the seat of Heaven.

It practically means, here **Vamana/Vishnu** applies his **Brain Power/mental strength** and devises a strategy through proper thought process to capture **Bali's** kingdom, uses his **feet** to remove demon king from heaven to reinstate **Indra** there.

6. Parashurama's man-made Axe: As the name suggests, in the Hindu legends, the character **Parashurama** is always identified with a **Parashu/ an Axe** given by **Lord Shiva** to this **Rama**, and hence termed as **Parashurama**. Whenever, **Parashurama** senses a trouble from the Royal class people, he makes use of Parashu/Axe to eliminate them completely.

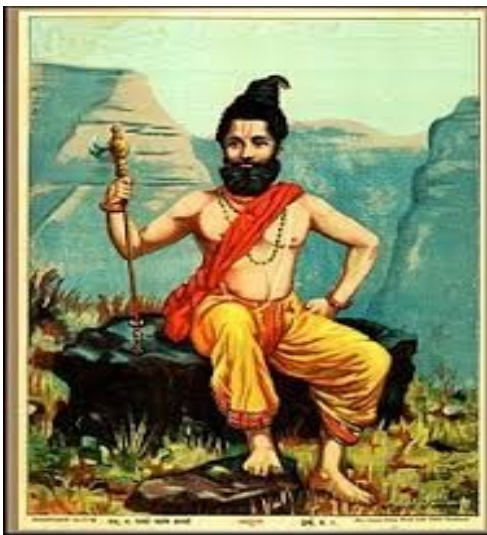


Figure-4. Parashurama holding an Axe.

As we know, an **Axe** or **Parashu** is a man-made weapon that has a sharp blade made up of hard material (bone or stone or metal), and has a long handle/shaft to hold it firmly, which also helps in directing the physical energy with ease to hit an enemy

at a specific location. It falls in the category of ancient **Individual weapons** like Mace (Gada), Sword, Spear, Dagger etc. The **Personal** or **Individual Weapons** are used for **One to One fight** in a **Close Quarter Battle**.

It also means, through the character **Parashurama**, the composer of the story wants to introduce us progress made by man in the field of the individual weapons for the simultaneous application of Physical and Brain Power.

7. Rama's Bow : The character **Rama** is regularly associated with a **Bow and the Arrows**, a very special man made weapon used since ancient time to attack an enemy from a long distance with the precision.



Figure-5. Rama carrying a Bow and the Arrows.

Although **Parashurama**, the earlier incarnation of **Vishnu**, has also been linked with use of **Shiv-Dhanushya** (Shiva's Bow), but it is very heavy / bulky or a crude one. **Rama's** Bow has to be the upgraded version of the earlier, and hence lightweight, more sophisticated weapon, can be handled with ease. An arrow ejected by a bow can hit the target with the pinpoint accuracy from relatively longer distance, and hence **Rama's Bow** represents an advanced weapon as compared to **Parashurama's Axe**.

As **Archery** is seen today in the form of Sports only, Modern Weapons like Pistols, Carbines, Rifles have replaced it since a long, Advanced field guns like Tank Guns, Howitzers are used in the battlefields to destroy the enemy and the weaponry.

Historians believe that **Genghis Khan**, a Mongolian Tribe Leader of late twelve and early thirteen centuries, who founded Mongol dynasty in the Central Asia, had extensively used **Composite Bows** to defeat the local kings.

8. Krishna's Sudarshan Chakra: In the epic **Mahabharata**, it has been mentioned that **Krishna** uses **Sudarshan Chakra**, his very special weapon twice; first when he severs head of **Shishupal** his cousin, and second time when he covers the Sun with it during the Mahabharata war just to help **Arjuna** to fulfill his vow of killing **Jayadratha** (brother-in-law of **Duryodhana**) before sunset, to take revenge of killing of his son **Abhimanyu**.



Figure-6. Krishna using Sudarshan-chakra to behead Shishupal

The speciality of **Sudarshan Chakra** (a rotating disc) is that after completion of the task, it comes back to the originator (Krishna). Therefore, it can be used several times.

Modern day Fighter Aircrafts or Bombers also do the similar job. After hitting the assigned targets of the enemy territory, they are supposed to come back to their airbases.

Advanced smart aerial vehicles like **Drone** and **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles** (UAV) can be included in the category of **Sudarshan Chakra**.

It should be noted here that **Krishna** does not share **Sudarshan Chakra** with anyone, including **Arjuna**. But when **Pandavas** live in exile, then he visits them, and specifically tells **Arjuna** to acquire **Divyastra** from **God Shiva**. Accordingly, **Arjuna** does penance, fights a battle with **Shiva**, and then obtains **Pashupatastra** from **Shiva** (please read Kirata-Arjuna story), but never uses it during wartime.

In this way, **Krishna** makes it clear to **Pandavas** that if they want to enjoy the throne of **Hastinapur**, then they have to prepare for war first.

9. Buddha's Non-violence Philosophy: Non-violence is popularly known as **Ahimsa** in **Sanskrit**, applies to all living beings including all animals. Once **Buddha** says “ Even if I have a shield in one hand, and a sword in other, but I do not know how to make use of them”. It shows his commitment to the philosophy of non-violence. It means, **Buddha** is **Armless**, and hence **Harmless** as well. **Buddha** teaches peaceful co-existence on earth of all, but to attain permanent happiness there is need to eliminate all kinds of sufferings. **Buddha** stresses development of **inner strength** via **Meditation**, does not recommend use of any Physical or Weaponry force to achieve success in life.



Figure-7. Buddha as Sanyasi, Philosopher and Preacher of non-violence

Buddha preaches non-violence in the context of finding peace within and not outside. His idea of non-violence was in the form of self realization; in the context of a person seeking it through the path of a Sanyasi. **Buddha** is also known as **Shakya-Muni**.

Before his death, **Buddha** establishes an organized structure or a new religious institute whose guiding principles are based on **Buddha's teaching**, path is **Dharma/righteousness** , and the companions are the members of **Sangha or society**.

Therefore, **Buddha** has been aptly called as the “**Light of Asia**”

In this way, from the weaponry development point of view, the story of **Dashavatar of Vishnu** can be used to explain the progress made by man in the various stages from the early use of physical power (**Narasimhavatar- Animistic feature**) to application of the most advanced weapon (**Krishna-Sudarshan Chakra**) to the complete rejection of the Weapons (**Non-violence of Buddha**).

Highlights of the Category-II Characters:

Vamana: Born in **Brahmin** family, behaves like **Brahmin** means first makes use of brain, and then acts accordingly to dislodge king **Bali** in a systematic way.

Parashurama : Born to **Brahmin** father, but exhibits strong traits of **Kshatriya**/warrior, kills many **Kshatriyas**/Warriors to take revenge.

Rama: Takes birth in **Kshatriya** family, his family brings him up as favourite prince, mostly follows a set of rules in day to day life, kills **Sage's** son (**Ravana** -Rakshasa), but uses **Idealist Approach** while ruling **Ayodhya**.

Krishna: Born to **Kshatriya** parents, grows up as a common person (cowherd), since birth lives under life-threat, hence very watchful, kills his maternal uncle, does not believe in “ **forget and forgive**” policy (this aspect can be judged from the story of **Shishupala** killing, wherein **Krishna** keeps counting 100 sins of **Shishupala** before finally beheading him), mostly applies **Practical or Realistic Approach in life**.

Buddha: Born in **Kshatriya** family, lives as protected prince in the early life, believes in compassion, has no interest in showing warrior class power, but exhibits natural inclination towards becoming Sanyasi, leaves his palace in search of solution to the burning problem of sufferings, uses **Holistic Approach** while preaching his philosophy.

Among the five incarnations, **Vamana** and **Parashurama** depict **Brahmin** origin, and the remaining three show **Kshatriya/warrior** origin of **Vishnu**. But the character **Parashurama** indicates transition of a **Brahmin** to a **Kshatriya**, and the character **Buddha** represents transformation of **Kashtriya** to a **Sage** of high order. Out of these five characters, **Vamana and Rama** speak through their “**Actions**”, **Parashurama and Krishna** make their motives clear thorough their “**Reactions**”, and **Krishna and Buddha** express their views through their “**Thoughts**”.

From above analysis, it is clear that birth of a person in a particular clan does not make him to follow the tradition of his family. **Parushurama's** father **Jamadagni**, is a well known Sage, but **Parushurama** behaves more like a pure **Kshatriya**. As his mother comes from **Kshatriya** family, that could be the major impacting factor on his behavior.

Similarly, in **Ramayana**, **Ravana** is identified as **Rakshasa**. As per the legend, both **Ravana's** father and grandfather are famous Sages. But his mother is from **Daitya clan** (demonic family), and probably the aspect of her origin leaves permanent mark on the behavior of **Ravana**, despite the fact that he is treated as a **Scholar**, and a follower of **Shiva**. **Rama** gets the best possible up-bringing or start or **Sanskaras** in his early life, and hence becomes well behaved person.

As far as **Krishna** is concerned, his personal experiences since his childhood makes him to behave likewise. In comparison to **Rama**, **Krishna** does not go by the opinions or versions of the people, but makes decision on his own.

As a child, **Buddha** regularly shows concern about all living beings. This may be partly due to early death of his real mother who dies immediately after his birth. And partly, it could be attributed to his overprotecting father, who constantly tries to keep **Siddhartha Gautama away from the ground realities of life**. When young **Siddhartha Gautama closely watches factual picture of life of the people and their struggle to overcome the sufferings daily, he gets disturbed totally**. Finally, he makes up his mind to leave his palace in search of the answers and becomes **Sanyasi (called as Shakya Muni)**.

Traditionally, a clan or **Kula** is identified by name of a dominant male born in that family, and in most of the legends, female contribution is always neglected or

remains unnoticed. In case of legendary characters like **Parashurama and Ravana**, we find that, ancestry or origin of their mothers play a **crucial role** in shaping the behaviour of these two personalities. In other words, birth of a person in a given clan or caste, does not give any assurance that he would inherit all qualities of his Father only, but the background of his mother (contribution of mother's genes) also has its role in forming his nature. Additionally, conditions prevailing while growing up (**Krishna**), and the man's up-bringing (**Rama**) can also influence the actual behavior of a person.

The lifestory of **Buddha** clearly manifests that a person born in **Kshatriya** caste can also achieve the status of a well known **Sage/Muni** (acquires qualities of high level **Brahmin**) based on his dedicated efforts together with single minded devotion to obtain advanced knowledge through **Tapasya** or **Sadhana** or **Penance**.

Source of Information: Puranas, Epics, Mythological stories, Internet etc

All photographs/images are sourced from Internet/ Public domain.